

COUNCIL WILL FIGHT INCREASE IN GAS CHARGES

Aldermen Are Determined Citizens' Rights Shall Be Protected.

MAYOR OPTIMISTIC

Declares Rate Will Return To Ninety Cents After Next May.

What the council did:

Decided to have the solicitor and the council oppose the application of the City Gas Company to the Legislature to increase the price of gas.

Referred the proposal of Ald. Ashplant to charge the industries in the annexed area for school taxes on their full assessment to the city solicitor for opinion.

Referred to the solicitor the proposal to collect the tax on the Western University grant along with the school tax instead of with the general tax.

Defeated a motion to ask the Durny government if justice was done to the late deputy sheriff when he was dismissed from office.

Granted the request of the board of health to ask the Dominion government to have all dairy herds tested for tuberculosis.

Decided to take no action on the abolition of the city fish stall.

Referred back to the board of works the sewer bylaws which it was proposed to put through on a two-thirds vote of the council.

Decided to ask the chamber of commerce to enter the members of the council and clerk as full members in lieu of the yearly grant of \$5,000 made by the council.

Will ask Hamilton and Toronto for information as to their agreement which allows cars to stand near street lights after sundown without displaying lights as called for by the statute.

Will consider the proposal of Ald. May to separate the income tax office from the assessment department.

Adopted the proposal to allow the housing commission to make a material cut in the selling price of the 36 houses on hand.

Approved of a bylaw authorizing the utilities commission to raise \$250,000, half for water-works and half for electrical.

Decided to allow auctioneers to start sales on the market at 10 a.m. instead of 11 a.m.

Adopted the report of No. 1 committee, to the effect that the charges against Relief Inspector McCullum, made by A. Fields, were not proven.

Approved of the new regulations for the governing of the erection of gasoline tanks in the city.

Accepted the settlement made by Mayor Wilson in the Knollwood Park sewer matter.

Adopted a resolution of condolence to be extended to the family of the late C. T. Campbell, M.D.

The city council had quite a busy session on Monday night, the two main questions of the evening being the preparation to fight the City Gas Company's application to increase its charge to \$1.40, and the motion of Ald. H. B. Ashplant, calling for the collection of school taxes on the full assessment of the industries in the annex. At the present time many of these industries pay on a fixed assessment.

The council went into committee of the whole to decide on what action should be taken in regard to the gas company's application.

Council Should Appeal.

Ald. Judd said that the solicitor and members of the council should be present when the application was before the private bills committee of the Legislature. It should be advocated that the company should return to its agreement to sell gas to the city for 90 cents. He also proposed that should the committee of the Legislature see eye to eye with the company and agree to an increase over the 90 cents, then the council should have the committee make it a condition to the gas company paying back to the citizens the \$6,000 collected as a readiness-to-serve charge and retained by the

Thieves Broke Into M.C.R. Station But Got Nothing For Their Pains

ST. THOMAS, Feb. 6.—Thieves ransacked the M. C. R. Station at Fargo some time Sunday night or early Monday morning, but despite a thorough search failed to find anything of value, according to information received at the company's offices in this city today.

It is believed that the miscreants were tramps who were beating their way through on freights. Entrance was gained through a door at the rear of the station, the lock of which was forced. A towerman who was on duty a short distance from the station failed to see the thieves at their work.

The case is being investigated by Capt. Cask, M. C. R. detective.

company through a legal technicality. This could be either paid back or deducted from the bills of the consumers over a period of one year. Morally, the company was bound to pay the money back, he contended.

Ald. Ashplant agreed. He contended that the gas company had treated the city in a mean and in what might also be termed a contemptible manner.

Ald. Holmes suggested that the solicitor and entire council should attend the session of the committee. He also pointed out that the company would put up a hard fight, and Ald. Judd agreed that there would be a strong lobby of the company to get the new rate approved.

Mayor Optimistic.

Mayor Wilson expressed the opinion that when the present agreement expires in May, the rate will return to 90 cents. He could not see that any legislature had the right to break a binding agreement without the consent of both parties. There was a moral obligation, as in the case of the agreement with the people in the city annex.

Ald. Ashplant disagreed as to the latter. He said that the agreements were not at all alike.

The council adopted the proposal that no stone be left unturned to fight the gas company's application.

Ald. Ashplant had what might be termed a double-barreled shot to level at the industries in the annexed area. The first called for the collection of school taxes on the full assessed value, instead of the fixed assessment of the industry, and the second would have the tax on the Western University collected as a school tax, instead of a general tax. This latter would mean that industries now exempt from general tax, as most of the industries are in the annex, would have to pay a portion of the \$250,000 grant to Western University. The council will seek the opinion of the solicitor on the matter before going ahead, as the details of the agreement as it relates to school taxes are not familiar to the members of the council.

The motion of Ald. Ashplant was as follows:

"That the clerk be instructed to collect the school rate in the Annex territory, on the full valuation as shown on the assessor's roll at the city hall, for the current year, in accordance with the requirement of the municipal act;

"That the assessment commissioner be instructed to include the Western University estimates in the school rate, and not in the general rate for the current year's tax."

In support of the motion Ald. Ashplant contended that bylaws and agreements could not touch school taxes as had been done in the case in question. He did not propose to touch the 15-mill agreement, but wanted the industries to pay school taxes on their full assessment the same as did the workmen of the annex who worked in the industries. He cited the municipal act in support of his contention which said that houses and fixed assessments shall not apply to school taxes. There were many court decisions he said in support of his contention. Were such a contention allowed to go on as is the case in the annex, there would be no educational facilities whatsoever supplied.

Must Keep Bargain.

As for the second part of the motion, he pointed out that the exemption from the general tax rate granted industries, relieved them from shouldering a share of the city's grant to the western university. If this tax was added to the school rate then it would be collected as a school tax and the industries would not escape.

Mayor Wilson declared that it did not matter how unpopular the agreement was, the people entered into a moral obligation with the district in question. If the city had made a bad bargain, it was no reason that the city should break it.

In regard to the proposal to let his motion stand until the solicitor has passed upon it, Ald. Ashplant contended that the onus should be on the other fellow and he would like to see it go through.

Ald. Judd said that he understood that there was no mention of school

taxes in the agreement at all and for this reason he was agreeable to get the solicitor's opinion, and if this was the case, then it would be all right to put the onus on the other fellow.

This was agreed to.

Advocate Lights Measure.

Ald. John May introduced the matter of having cars carry lights when standing after sundown in the downtown sections. He contended that this was in a measure a hardship, and said that in Hamilton and Toronto there was an agreement with the police commission that a car could stand within fifty feet of a street lamp without its lights burning.

Mayor Wilson said that the police commission was not in favor of such a measure. However, the cities of Toronto and Hamilton will be communicated with with a view of learning how they get over the matter.

Ald. May also asked Mayor Wilson to take under consideration a proposal to separate the income tax department from the assessment department. With all due respect to Mr. Grant, he believed that the present officer could perhaps double the present return to the city.

Ald. Watkinson and Holmes will go to Toronto on Friday to attend a conference called by Mayor McGuire, Toronto, in regard to hydro legislation.

Mayor Wilson said that the investment of the hydro centers was being endangered by contemplated legislation, and he considered the conference important. The city should be represented.

Ald. Ashplant's motion to take up the dismissal of Deputy Sheriff B. F. Waterworth was defeated by the council, the alderman calling for the yeas and nays.

Ald. Judd contended that the council was going out of the bounds of its jurisdiction in interfering in a provincial matter, and the mayor said that the city would be open to the retort courteous that it was a county matter.

Ald. Ashplant, in introducing his motion, presented it in the best light possible, contending that there was some assurance that there has been no injustice done. On division, Aldermen Watkinson, Holmes, Ashplant, Ashton and Drake voted for the resolution, and Aldermen Childs, Judd, May, Bean, Douglas and Brighton voted against.

Resolution Introduced.

The resolution as introduced read:

"Whereas, it is desirable that the high office of sheriff should command public respect, and be held free from unfavorable criticism in this community; and

"Whereas, the recent summary dismissal from office of Deputy Sheriff Benj. F. Waterworth, by Sheriff Graham, has caused unfavorable comment in this community; and

"Whereas, many citizens are in doubt as to whether or not justice has been done to the said Benj. F. Waterworth, who held public office in this city for over a quarter century, and is a citizen in good repute; therefore,

"This council, representing the citizens of London, calls the attention of Dr. H. A. Stevenson, M.L.A., to the matter herein referred to, and requests him to call the attention of the department of justice to the said matter, with a respectful request that the said department of justice will take such steps as it may deem in the public interest to assure this community that justice has been done to the said late Deputy Sheriff B. F. Waterworth."

The city clerk is hereby instructed to forward a copy of this resolution to Dr. H. A. Stevenson, M.L.A., Frederick Drury, and to Attorney-General Laurier.

It is safe to say that hardly another member of the council understood the position of Ald. F. R. Watkinson in regard to a clause in the report of No. 1 committee, which read: "that the question of discontinuing the city fish market be referred to the council."

"There is \$125,000 a year going to Toronto. Do you want it to do so?" asked the alderman.

That was all he intended to say, he remarked, but some of the aldermen asked for light on the matter and the alderman said that the city fish market was not selling fish as it was originally intended. It was to sell fish at cost. Now it was selling fish lower than any other. Other dealers found it bad business to undersell the city fish market as people would say they were trying to wreck the city stall.

Mayor Wilson wanted to know if the city stall went out of business would it lower the price of fish.

Want Fish Stall Abolished.

Thomas Blanchard, the fish dealer, said that the city stall was a war measure and he believed that the war was over long enough now. He pointed out that the city refused the old dealers the right to sell in the market and then allowed outsiders in. He said that Watkinson was wrong when he said that the money went to Toronto.

Ald. Childs suggested that the matter go back to No. 1. Others moved that "no action be taken." Mayor Wilson said both suggestions were the same. It will go back to No. 1. The motion that no action be taken carried. This will mean that it does not go back to No. 1 committee, and instead it will take a two-thirds vote of the council to reopen the question again.

Chas. Mitchell, of the board of health, spoke to the council in regard to the motion to have the fertilizer plant removed. He said that he had been talking to the heads of the company and they were now seeking new machinery and would

remove the distressing odor, which is being complained of.

Ald. Drake said that the plant should be moved.

Ald. Ashton wanted to know who located the plant on its present site.

Mayor Wilson said the city got the firm to move to the county and they located on the present site. Since then the city has grown up around the plant.

Referred To Board.

The matter was referred to the board of health.

When two by-laws for sewers, one on Regina and the other on Glasgow streets came up, both to be voted on under the two-third vote system, Mayor Wilson called a halt. Before proceeding he thought that it would be wise for the council to lay down a definite policy. He had said, and he thought the members of the council were in agreement, that if people did not want a local improvement they should not be forced to accept it. He was in favor of the plan of notifying the people of the cost of a work before it was undertaken.

In regard to the Glasgow street sewer, it was pointed out that the resident to benefit has asked for the sewer.

Mayor Wilson said that he should be first acquainted with the cost of the sewer he was going to lose his all.

Mayor Wilson pointed out that the sewer was in Knollwood Park, and he believed that in sewer extensions in the annex, the city should have a written agreement with the residents of the annex, and he was in favor of the cost of the proposed work.

Both matters went back to No. 2 committee.

Ald. Douglas and Drake are out to have a number of changes made in the traffic by-law and a couple of regulations, fathered by Ex-Ald. W. A. Wilson, are slated for the discard. One of these is in regard to cars stopping within five feet of a lane or highway. The aldermen will bring their proposals before the board of works.

NEW COLLEGIATE TO OPEN FEB. 20

Trustees, After Inspection, Decide On Date For Formal Opening.

London's new collegiate institute will be occupied by its pupils the morning of February 20. Such is the present intention of the school trustees as announced Tuesday.

At the instigation of Trustee A. E. Silverwood, chairman of No. 3 committee of the board, all the trustees, with one exception, gathered at the collegiate Monday afternoon, and conducted a thorough inspection. Trustee Silverwood explains that as a result of this, he will be able to present an official report at the general meeting of the board Tuesday afternoon, thus obviating the necessity of a special meeting for the same purpose.

While it was originally intended that No. 3 committee only would inspect the school Monday, it was deemed more expedient if all the trustees should participate as several of them had not been through the building.

"We found conditions fairly satisfactory," Trustee Silverwood said Tuesday. "Of course, there are a few minor defects to be remedied yet, but we have set Monday, February 20 as the date for the formal opening. There are of course certain adjustments to be made, but these will be left to the committee to arrange with the contractors. In a general way, however, I may say that the committee expressed approval of present conditions."

Mr. Lindsay McLellan Scott, sales representative, Scott Paint-Varnish Company, Ltd., left for Montreal last evening to spend a few days visiting the factory of the International Varnish Company and such other plants that supply the Scott Paint-Varnish Company with paint materials. On his way home he will stop off at Toronto to visit the varnish plant of the International Varnish Company. Mr. Scott is one of the youngest paint and varnish salesmen in Canada, and when he returns from his visit to the paint and varnish factories will be able to intelligently take up all matters re the manufacture of the lines he is promoting the sale of.

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REPORTS SOUTH AFRICA STRIKE SITUATION CALM

LONDON, England, Feb. 7.—Dispatches from South Africa today report the apparent calming down of the mining strike situation at least in so far as it had resulted in demands for the proclamation of a republic. A Johannesburg message says another mass meeting held at the town hall there on Monday, developed a reversal of feeling against the resolution passed by Sunday's meeting, favoring a republic. Mordant's gathering insisting that proponents of the republic who kept interrupting the proceedings should leave the meeting.

The message adds that a deputation of strikers which went to Pretoria, carrying the Johannesburg resolution favoring a republic to a member of the parliament met with a cool reception. The member urged them against any action not constitutional.

Meanwhile, however, a conference held between government and miners' representatives at Pretoria, to talk over a possible settlement of the mine strike failed of any definite accomplishment.

RESIDENT 70 YEARS DIES.

WOODSTOCK, Feb. 6.—Mrs. Hugh Murray, born 70 years ago in West Zorra, died this morning. She is survived by three sons and one daughter.

Tubes were laid beneath London streets 60 years ago for transmitting mail by compressed air, but the project was unsuccessful.

TOWN COUNCIL IN HOT DEBATE AT STRATHROY

Question of Furniture Company's Alleged Debt the Cause.

MANY WARM CLASHES

Council Finally Decide To Meet Representatives of Company in Discussion.

BY WILLIAM SHARMAN.

STRATHROY, Feb. 6.—That the Middlesex Furniture Company, originally known as the Colonial Chair Company, shall be compelled to meet its obligations with the corporation of Strathroy, was the attitude of F. J. Bateman, mayor, presiding at the regular session of the town council here tonight.

Although Mayor Bateman deemed it expedient to prevent Councillor Wright from voting, a motion was finally passed that the councillors immediately confer with the officials of that company, with a view toward an early settlement of the sum of \$2,000 and interest thereon, such money, it being claimed, being three yearly payments, 1915, 1916, 1917, that the company failed to make to the town according to their agreement in 1910, when the company borrowed \$20,000.

Moved Committee Formed.

Explaining that there has ensued considerable discussion and not a little anxiety among a great body of the taxpayers, Councillor Langan at tonight's gathering moved that a committee consisting of the mayor, reeve and deputy reeve, be appointed to meet representatives of the company and have the question definitely settled. Councillor Wright opposed this move, claiming that the entire council should be represented, as they were all vitally interested. He believed that if they met the company in the right spirit a favorable settlement would be effected.

Up to the Councillors.

"Well, it's up to the councillors to see that this money is paid," interjected the mayor. "It has been hanging fire since 1915." Councillor Wright then questioned as to whether it would not be advisable to await the completion of the auditor's report. Mayor Bateman retorted that the report itself would not reveal anything further than what was already known to the council and the citizens.

"Everybody knows it is \$2,000 and the interest thereon," he said. "You all know it, every annual statement has shown it. It is time something was done, and if you have any regard it is time for you to get busy."

"That's a body blow right enough," commented Councillor Wright. The latter then moved an amendment that the council as a body meet the company.

"They'll be pleased to come, I am sure," he said. "They might even bring the money with them."

"Strike To Settle."

Councillor Evey expressed a like opinion. Seconding Councillor Langan's motion, Deputy Reeve Pike recalled the fact that before the election he had not made any promises, but he had made a statement that he would exert every effort to see that this debt was cleared.

He explained that while he was not antagonistic to the company, he wanted to see the council get down to business and square the thing. Reeve Lewis, rising to support Councillor Wright, felt that the question was too vital to be left to a small committee. He was against any move by the mayor to exclude the two old councillors, Burkeholder and Wright.

At this juncture, Mayor Bateman ruled Councillor Wright's motion out of order. Councillor Wright accepted this ruling philosophically, reiterating his belief that the \$2,000 would be eventually paid. Councillor Evey moved that the entire council meet the company, and the first vote resulted in a deadlock, the mayor voting for the original motion and incidentally barring Councillor Wright from voting.

Orders Opinion Expressed.

Councillor Burkeholder had already left the hall, and Councillor Elliott did not participate. After considerable discussion, Mayor Bateman ordered the latter to express an opinion. Councillor Elliott voted that the entire council meet the company's representative.

Earlier in the evening a communication was read from "A Citizen," asking for information as to who was Strathroy's solicitor and who composed the Middlesex Furniture Company. Reeve Lewis contended that as the writer had not signed a name, the letter should be ignored. The

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MAY GET CONTROL OF POLICE BODIES

Biggs Likely To Head Unit If Amalgamation Is Obtained.

TORONTO, Feb. 6.—With the approach of the coming session of the Provincial Legislature, more determined efforts are being put forth to bring about the amalgamation of the provincial police force with the unit of motor cycle police operating on the provincial highways under the jurisdiction of the Hon. F. C. Biggs, minister of public works.

Those favoring the amalgamation of the two forces point out that the highway motor cycle police, now used exclusively for the apprehension of speeding motorists, could also be

used for the purpose of putting a stop to the operations of motor bandits. The speed of the motor cycle, it is argued, is the chief factor in curbing the efforts of the motor bandits.

"Modern highwaymen are always equipped with high-speed cars," stated a police officer in touch with the situation today, "and the motor cycle officer is the best means of combating this menace, in my opinion." Efforts will also be made by the provincial police to have a "central" prison established for the holding of dangerous prisoners prior to their trial. This endeavor follows the successful escape of the Murrell brothers from the jail at London. Edward Bayley, deputy attorney general, recommended the erection of such a prison following the Murrells' escape.

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